BRITISH COLUMBIA
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BCStats

Infoline

Contact: bcstats.infoline@gov.bc.ca Issue: 08-09 February 29, 2008

- **Investment expected to increase 4.6% during 2008 as both private and public sector spend more**
- **Spending in BC forecast to remain below the national average for a second straight year**
- **Production at BC sawmills down 10.7% during 2007**

Private & Public Investment

- **Private and public sector investment in British Columbia is expected to increase 4.6% this year.** Spending by the public sector is forecast to rise just 2.9%, well below the double-digit levels seen in recent years (public sector investment jumped 21.4% in 2007). Private sector establishments, however, predict that investment will rise 5.1% this year, more than double the 2.0% increase in 2007.

  Total investment in construction projects is forecast to rise 5.2%, largely due to a planned 7.0% increase in private sector spending. For the first time since 2001, spending by the public sector, which has been boosted by many pre-Olympic projects, is expected to shrink (-1.6%).

  Investment in new machinery and equipment is forecast to increase 3.2%, largely because the public sector expects to spend significantly more (+15.4%) on machinery and equipment this year, nearly double the 8.1% growth in 2007. In the private sector, however, investment in machinery and equipment will likely remain relatively stable, inching ahead only 0.4%.

  Among the provinces, Manitoba (+18.8%) and Saskatchewan (+18.0%) are forecast to see the biggest jump in investment during 2008. Spending in Newfoundland (+15.0%) is also expected to rise at double-digit. For the second year in a row, BC together with Alberta (+3.8%) and Ontario (+3.1%), is likely to see private and public sector investment increase at rates below the national average (+5.2%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

The Economy

- **Production at BC sawmills and planing mills fell 19.4% in December, relative to the same month of 2006.** The decline was largely due to a downturn at mills in the Interior, where production slumped 21.0%. BC's Coastal mills produced 7.5% less than they had a year earlier. Total Canadian production was down 18.6%, reflecting the weakness in BC (which accounted for nearly half of the Canadian total) as well as other parts of the country. Quebec, the country's second-biggest producer, decreased its output by 10.5%. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **In December, there were 36,110 recipients of regular employment insurance (EI) benefits in the province, down 0.3% (*seasonally adjusted*) from the previous month.** Nationally, the number was up 2.2% as eight provinces saw increases. Newfoundland (-1.0%) was the only other province to see fewer EI beneficiaries. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Farm cash receipts in the province rose 3.9% (seasonally adjusted) in the fourth quarter of 2007.** Strong crop revenues (+9.7%) were responsible for most of the increase as receipts for livestock were relatively flat (+0.9%) and direct payments to farmers from government programs (-13.7%) dropped sharply. Nationally, cash receipts jumped ahead 10.7% in the fourth quarter *Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats*

- **Total sales in BC food services and drinking places fell 3.0% (*seasonally adjusted*) in December.** A decline in receipts at food service establishments offset higher returns at drinking places.

  Nationally, the industry posted a drop (-1.2%) in business. Food service receipts fell 1.2%, with limited-service eating places (-1.7%) recording the largest decline. Revenues were also down at drinking places (-0.5%). At the provincial level,

Report Trends in BC's Tourism Sector

Did you know...
Eighty-four BC leap year babies born in 2004 are celebrating their first birthday today!

Quebec (+0.2%) was the only province to show an increase. *Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats*

2007 in Review

- **During 2007, the volume of lumber produced at BC sawmills fell 10.7%, to 36.7 million cubic metres.** Production at Coastal mills plunged 28.9% partly because a labour dispute shut down Coastal mills for several weeks. In the Interior, where the mountain pine beetle has been ravaging forests, production was down 7.8%. Production at Canadian sawmills also declined (-10.9%) during 2007. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Total sales at BC's food services and drinking places increased 3.8% in 2007.** Revenues at drinking places (+10.0%) rebounded following two consecutive years of declines, while food service receipts (+3.4%) were also higher. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

Tourism

- **Canadians took 5.8 million overnight trips to the US between July and September 2007, up 12.0% from the same period in 2006.** They spent close to $2.8 billion in the US, 22.0% more than in the previous year. The top US destinations were New York (1.2 million overnight visits), Washington (786,000) and Michigan (503,000).

  Europe continued to be the most popular overseas continent, accounting for 8 of the top 10 overseas countries visited by Canadians. The UK, France, Germany and Italy were the most common destinations. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **An estimated 5.6 million Americans took overnight trips to Canada during the third quarter of 2007, injecting $3.1 billion into the national economy.** However, overnight travel from the US was down 3.1%. Pleasure travel (-3.0%) and trips to visit friends and relatives (-1.1%) fell, and the number of business travellers (-3.3%) also declined. Most American visitors to Canada originated from New York (718,000), Michigan (514,000) and Washington (470,000).

  The number of travellers from overseas countries rose (+2.4%) to 1.8 million overnight visits. The United Kingdom (358,000) continued to be Canada's largest overseas market. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

Education

- **Canadian 15 year-old students are strong performers when it comes to science.** Among 57 countries, only 15-year-olds in Finland and Hong Kong-China performed better than Canadians in 2006. Students in all ten provinces scored above the OECD average in the testing. Canadian students reported higher levels of confidence in performing science-related tasks and had a more positive perception of their ability to learn science than students in other OECD countries. *Data Source: SC, Catalogue 81-004-XIE*

- **Younger Canadians have lower levels of literacy than older Canadians had when they were in the same age group and at the same level of education.** This is particularly true for more highly educated individuals. Among those surveyed in 2003, 35-year-olds had approximately the same literacy levels as 25-year-olds, even though literacy skills usually decline during the years after leaving school. The finding that older age groups graduated with higher literacy skills than younger people holds across age distributions. *Data Source: SC, Catalogue 81-004-XIE*

The Nation

- **Prices for Canadian manufactured products were virtually unchanged in January (-0.1%), compared to the same month of last year, despite continued increases in prices for petroleum and coal products.** BC softwood lumber prices continued to slump, falling 16.6% overall However pulpwood chip prices were higher than in January 2007. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **The Canadian balance of international payments in current transactions slipped into a deficit situation in the fourth quarter, the first time since 1999 that this has occurred.** A lower goods surplus, and a record travel deficit, both contributed to this situation.

  During 2007, an unprecedented $115.4 billion of foreign direct investment flowed into Canada, surpassing the previous record level set in 2000. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

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For data originating from Statistics Canada, data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the catalogue number.

Infoline Report

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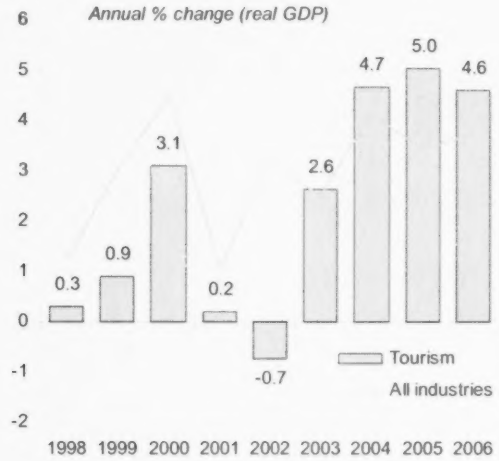
Originally published in
Business Indicators Issue 08-01

Trends in BC's Tourism Sector

Tourism plays an important role in the BC economy, with nearly $5.5 billion—about 4%—of the province's gross domestic product (GDP) originating in the tourism sector[1] in 2006. Employment in the sector totalled 120,400 people, accounting for one in every fifteen jobs in the province.

2006 another year of strong growth in BC's tourism sector



Data Source: BC Stats & Statistics Canada

The tourism sector expanded 4.6%[2] in 2006, outpacing the provincial economy for the fourth year in a row. The expansion during 2006 reflected solid gains in all of the main tourism industries. Tourism retailing fared particularly well (+6.0%) and growth was also robust in accommodation & food services (+5.7%). Transportation (+3.6%) and other tourism (+3.5%) services posted more modest, but still solid, increases.

Global economic conditions influence sector's performance

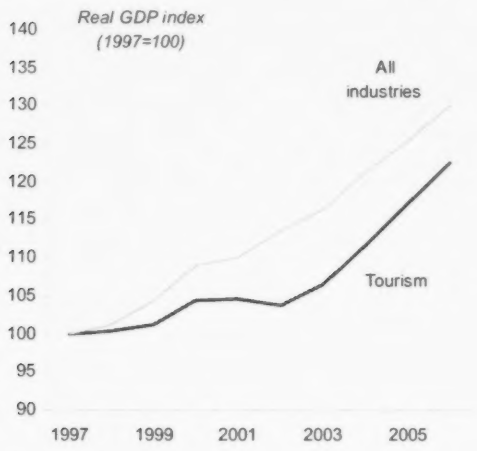
The province's tourism sector is greatly influenced by local as well as external economic conditions. Tourist expenditures are discretionary, so during periods of economic expansion, spending on these goods and services tends to increase. However, tourist spending dries up quickly when the economy is not performing as well.

The strong growth seen during the last four years is partly a reflection of relatively robust economic conditions in North America, since many visitors to BC come from other parts of Canada or the US. At the same time, travel to BC from further afield, especially Asian sources, has been increasing and this has also provided a boost to the tourism sector.

1 BC Stats' tourism statistics program is supported and partly funded by Tourism BC. The data presented in this report was produced in partnership with Tourism BC.

2 The methodology for calculating tourism GDP has been updated to incorporate new tourism proportions. Therefore, the data presented in this article is not comparable with previously-released figures. An explanation and discussion of the changes can be found in Appendix 1.
The GDP estimates in this report are based on data released by Statistics Canada in April 2007. Estimates for the tourism sector that are based on the November 2007 Statistics Canada release will not be available until later this year.

Tourism sector regaining lost ground



Data Source: BC Stats & Statistics Canada

With the recent growth, the sector has been able to gain back some of the ground lost around the turn of the century, when it went through a period of turbulence as an economic slowdown in Canada and the US, combined with external shocks such as the terrorist attacks of 9/11 put the brakes on tourist activity in many parts of North America. In BC, the tourism sector underperformed the provincial average in every year from 1998 to 2002.

The province is a destination favoured by visitors from overseas, especially Asia, and economic conditions in that part of the world also have an influence on the tourism sector. Asian travel to the province fell off significantly in 2003, as fears about the SARS outbreak in Toronto caused many travellers to change their planned visits to Canada. However, the downturn in Asian travel in 2003 does not appear to have significantly dampened the performance of BC's tourism sector, which posted a 2.6% growth rate in that year, edging past the all-industry average of 2.5%.

A note on GDP

GDP is a measure of the value added to the economy by a particular activity. It is calculated by subtracting the cost of supplies and services used to produce a good or service from total revenues. For example, the price of a restaurant meal covers the cost of food purchased to make the meal, the energy used to cook it, rent and other building expenses, cleaning supplies, accountant's fees, and so on. It also includes a mark-up intended to cover items such as wages, profits and depreciation. Although the restaurant uses food, energy and other inputs, its contribution to GDP is only the value added to the economy by the service it provided–the difference between the price paid by the consumer and the cost of inputs used by the restaurant.

The GDP figures reported in this article are reported in constant (1997) dollars. This means that they have been adjusted to eliminate the effects of price changes over time. They are measured at basic prices: i.e. they include subsidies but exclude some indirect taxes.

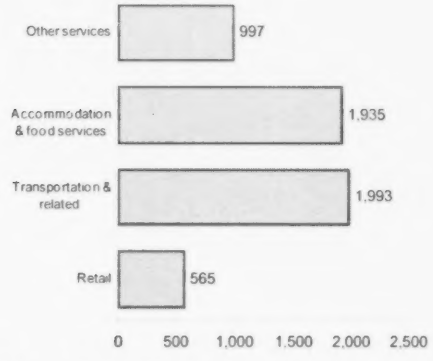
Key tourism activities

Many different types of services are included in the province's tourism sector. These range from accommodation & food services, to transportation, retailing, recreation, travel arrangement and vehicle rental services, cultural services, and various other types of services used by tourists travelling in BC.

Within the tourism sector, transportation (36%) and accommodation & food services (35%) account for roughly equal shares of total GDP. About 10% of the sector's GDP originates in retail activities, with other industries making up the remainder.

Air transportation, related services (the operation of airports, harbours and so on) and water transportation are the biggest industries within the transportation category, which also includes bus, taxi and rail services.

Accommodation, food services & transportation activities generate nearly three-quarters of the sector's GDP



Data Source: BC Stats

In the retailing industry, souvenir and gift shops, book and luggage shops all sell items purchased by tourists, so some of the activities of these retailers are attributed to the tourism sector. Other key activities include food, drug, gas and RV sales, as well as general merchandise and clothing retailers.

"Other tourism-related services" includes travel agents, vehicle rental agencies, an estimate of the value of vacation homes, performing arts, and a variety of other industries providing goods and services directly to tourists.

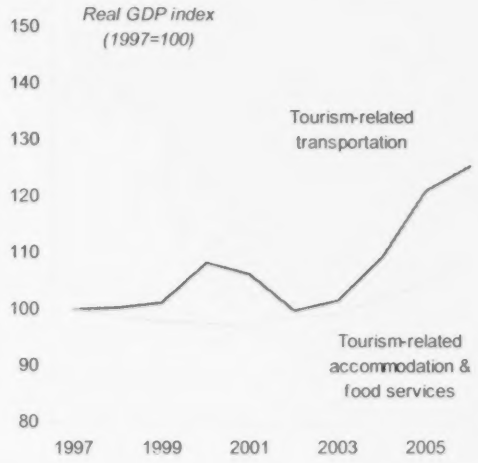
Transportation, other key tourism industries gaining momentum

Since 1997, GDP in the tourism sector has increased by nearly a quarter (23%), less than the 30% growth seen in the economy as a whole. However, within the sector, there are some variations in performance. Tourism-related retailing activities have expanded an estimated 33%, outstripping most other types of tourism activities. GDP in transportation was up 25%, despite slumping during the early part of the decade. However, the accommodation & food services industry has expanded only 10% since 1997.

The last decade has been a challenging one for the passenger transportation industry. The airline industry underwent major restructuring, as Canadian Airlines International, a key player, experienced financial difficulties which eventually led to its takeover by Air Canada. Other smaller air carriers also experienced problems, causing some to cease operations.

The decline in the transportation industry at the beginning of this decade was sharp and pronounced. It began with the difficulties in the airline industry, followed by a slowdown in the North American economy, which contributed to a reduction in travel for both business and pleasure. The events of 9/11, which had a big impact on the airlines, further exacerbated this problem.

Transportation industry taking off; slower growth in accommodation & food services



Data Source: BC Stats

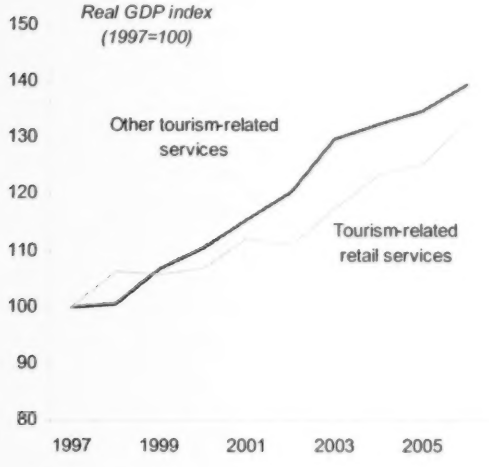
Since 2003, the industry has more than recovered the lost ground. This has occurred not only because air transportation activities have taken off, but also because other transportation services used by tourists have been picking up speed.

Are tourism sector estimates comparable to data for other industries?

Yes, as long as care is taken to ensure that GDP or jobs are not double counted. Since the tourism statistics are calculated by apportioning a share of total GDP or employment in each industry to the tourism sector, the tourism-related component must be subtracted from total GDP or employment in the relevant industries before making any comparisons.

BC's tourist-related accommodation & food services industries also began the decade in a downturn, with GDP falling throughout the period from 1997 to 2001. Since then, however, the industry has been on a relatively steady upward path.

Other tourism-related services boost overall growth in the sector



Data Source: BC Stats

The real significant growth in the tourism sector has originated in the smaller industries. GDP in tourism-related retail services has increased by a third since 1997, while even stronger growth of 39% was observed in the remaining tourism-related industries. Within this sector, vehicle rentals, tourism-related arts entertainment & recreation, and spending on vacation homes have posted particularly solid gains.

120,400 employed in BC's tourism sector

Employment[3] in the tourism sector was estimated at 120,400 in 2006, up 4.3% over the number in the previous year. The job growth was partly driven by strong gains in the accommodation & food services industry (+5.9%) but other industries within the tourism sector also took on more workers. Despite the strong gains, total employment in the tourism sector increased slightly less than in the economy as a whole, where the number of jobs (excluding the self-employed and workers in agriculture, fishing and private households) was up 4.8% in 2006. It should be noted that these employment figures include both full-time and part-time workers.

What is direct tourism employment?

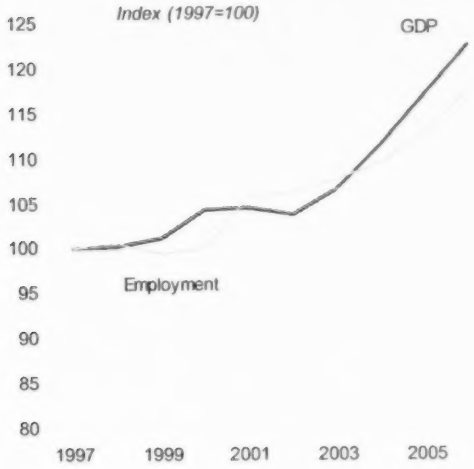
Direct tourism employment is a measure of the number of people working in various industries that serve tourists. It includes workers in industries ranging from accommodation & food services to retailing and transportation.

Direct tourism employment estimates are generated by assigning a percentage of total employment in various industries to the tourism sector. These percentages are calculated by BC Stats based on information from various sources.

About half (51%) of the workers in the tourism sector are employed in accommodation & food services. Transportation (24%) industries account for the second-biggest share of direct tourism employment, followed by retail trade (14%) and other services (11%).

3 Employment data are calculated using information from Statistics Canada's Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours (SEPH). This employment data excludes the self-employed. Self-employment is a significant factor in the tourism sector (and in the province as a whole). Information from the Labour Force Survey (a survey of households which includes the self-employed) suggests that the actual figure may be about 20% higher than what the SEPH data suggests. To ensure consistency when making comparisons, the all-industry employment total from SEPH is used in this document, rather than the more comprehensive employment figure from the Labour Force Survey.

Employment growth in the tourism sector slowed at the beginning of the decade



Data Source: BC Stats

Employment in the sector has not kept pace with GDP growth

The number of jobs in the tourism sector has expanded 18% since 1997, significantly less than the 23% increase in the sector's GDP. This is largely because employment growth in the sector as a whole stalled at the beginning of this decade. However, the overall performance of the sector masks differences among the tourism-related industries.

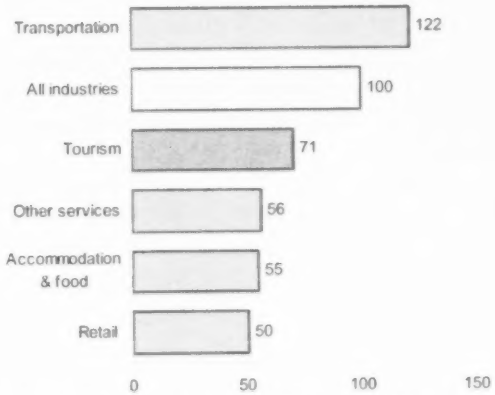
Employment and GDP in tourism-related retailing have been rising in tandem, but this is not true in the rest of the tourism sector. In transportation, for example, tourism GDP has increased two-and-a-half times as much as employment since 1997, suggesting that much of the growth in transportation has been driven by productivity improvements or more intensive use of existing labour resources (for example, employing more full-time rather than part-time workers).

In contrast, the accommodation & food services industry has seen tourism employment expand twice as much (+21%) as its GDP (+10%). The reasons why this is occurring are unclear. There has been an increase in the incidence of part-time employment in the industry, but this in itself is not enough to account for the discrepancy.

Tourism workers earned $3.8 billion in 2006

Workers in the tourism sector took home $3.8 billion in wages during 2006, an increase of 7.9% over the previous year but slightly less than the 8.5% gain recorded in 2005. Wages in accommodation & food services were up significantly, as both employment and average earnings advanced.

Workers in tourism-related transportation industries have the highest earnings



Average annual wage as % of all industry average (2006)

Data Source: BC Stats

For the tourism sector as a whole, annual earnings are about 71% of the average for all industries in the province. There are significant differences in average earnings within the sector. For example, transportation accounts for just under a quarter of total tourism employment, but 42% of the total wage bill. One reason for this is that many of the jobs in transportation require more training and higher skill levels than is the case in other tourism industries such as accommodation & food services, an industry which

often provides entry-level jobs to young workers. In addition, the transportation industry tends to be highly unionized, and this may also be a factor in the wage differentials. Average annual wages in other tourism industries tend to be lower. This is partly due to the prevalence of part-time employment in industries such as retailing and accommodation & food services.

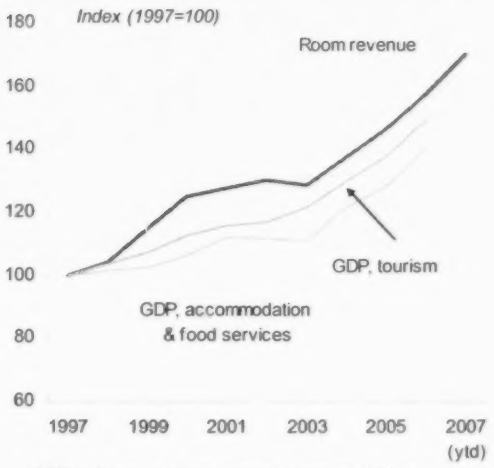
Room revenues and passenger traffic on the rise in 2007...

Although GDP and employment data for the tourism sector will not be available until later in the year, a number of key indicators suggest that 2007 was another relatively good year for the province's tourism-related industries.

Room revenue is only one indicator of the current state of the tourism sector, but based on the room revenue performance during the first 10 months, it appears likely that 2007 will be another year of growth. Revenues have been climbing steadily since 2003.

In the transportation industry, there are also indications of increased activity during 2007. Information on the number of passengers travelling through BC's two biggest airports (Vancouver and Victoria International), together with the number of passengers carried by BC Ferries, suggests that the industry continued to expand in 2007. The number of passenger vehicles travelling on the Coquihalla highway, another indicator of tourism activity, was also up in 2007.

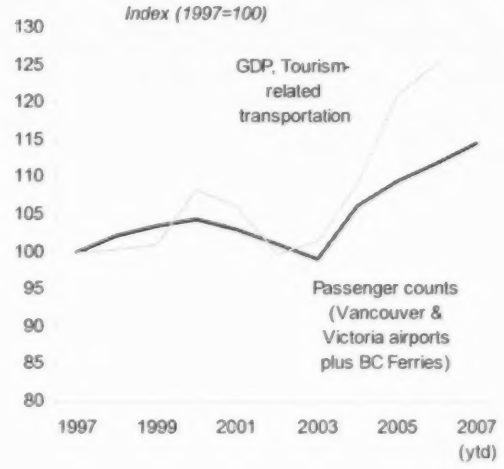
Room revenues continue to climb...



GDP in this graph is measured in current dollars

Data Source: BC Stats

...and key components of the transportation industry are building on past gains



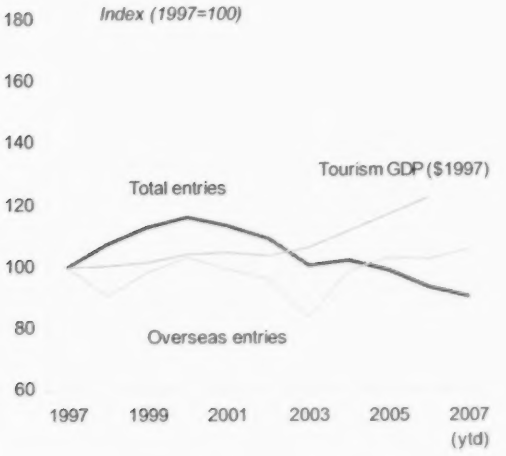
Data Sources: Vancouver & Victoria Airport Authorities, BC Ferries & BC Stats

...but visitor entries have been declining

Visitor entries into BC from the US and overseas have been declining steadily since 2001. This is largely driven by a downturn in visits from the US, which account for about 80% of total entries to the province. However, there

has also been some volatility in the number of entries from overseas sources, which are currently at about the same level as in 1997.

Despite a long-run decline in international entries, BC's tourism sector has continued to grow



Data Source: BC Stats & Statistics Canada

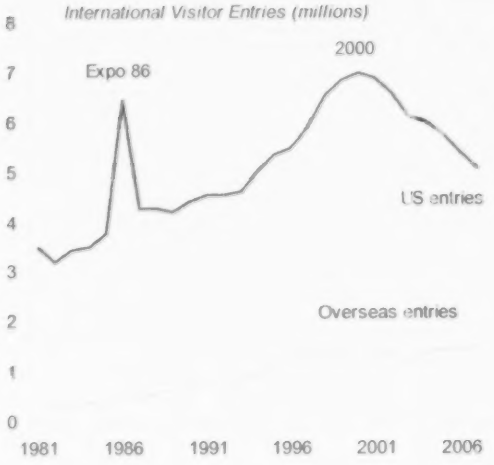
While the drop off in visitor entries is cause for concern, visitor entries are only a rough indicator of tourist activity in the province. Many people who enter Canada via BC are actually headed for other destinations. The province's location as a hub city for travellers from Asia means that many overseas visitors going to other parts of the country, or even south of the border, initially clear customs in Vancouver.

In the short run, the decline in entries does not appear to have had a significant dampening effect on the province's tourism sector. Tourism includes visits by Canadians travelling here from other provinces, as well as trips made closer to home. When British Columbians travel away from their usual place of residence, they are tourists, and these trips account for a significant share of total tourism.

It should also be noted that the decline in entries is a fairly recent phenomenon, and marks the end of a long upturn which followed Expo 86. The exposition attracted huge numbers of Americans during the summer of 1986, and kicked off a long-term growth spurt that did not stop until 2000–by which time visitor entries from the US had exceeded the record set in 1986.

The province will be hosting another big international event in two years. While a two-week long Olympics is highly unlikely to attract the numbers that came to visit Vancouver during the summer of 1986, it is already drawing the world's attention back to this province. It is to be hoped that this will help reverse the decline in visitors, especially from the US, that has been occurring in recent years.

US entries have dropped off significantly since 2000 but remain well above historic levels



Data Source: Statistics Canada

Appendix 1: Changes to methodology

Why were the numbers changed?

Tourism-related data are derived by allocating a percentage of the GDP, employment and wages in a given industry to tourism related industries. When the methodology for deriving tourism GDP and employment estimates was originally developed, there were very few external studies that could be consulted when developing these tourism proportions. The proportions used by BC Stats were based on information gleaned from telephone interviews with various representatives of tourism-related industries during the early 1990s. As well, extensive use was made of other data sources, such as passenger revenue statistics for industries in the transportation sector.

The tourism proportions have been reviewed and updated from time to time since they were originally developed, but there have not been major changes to some of the ratios.

During the last twenty years, there has been considerable interest in the development of tourism statistics in many jurisdictions, and there is a growing body of research in the area.

In the summer of 2007, a review of the proportions used by BC Stats was undertaken. This review included looking at work related to the measurement of the economic impact of tourism in other sectors of the economy, various sources of information on the activities in which tourists engage (such as the Canadian Travel Survey, which gives an indication of the types of activities in which Canadians who travel to BC typically participate), and direct contact with various industry representatives.

As a result of this review, a number of changes have been made to the tourist proportions used in the calculation of tourism GDP. In general, the revisions bring the BC Stats methodology more in line with that used in other jurisdictions, and reflect the results of research done since the BC Stats methodology was originally developed.

Although the overall effect of the revisions to the tourism proportions has been to slightly reduce the size of the tourism sector, the trends indicated by the data are little changed.

Changes to the tourism proportions

Changes to the tourism proportions are summarized below:

- For transportation, the tourist proportion of passenger air transportation was reduced from just under 100% to 95%, bringing it more in line with ratios used in other jurisdictions.
- The tourist proportion of passenger rail transportation was increased from 86% to 92%.
- For public passenger transit, the tourist proportion was increased from less than one percent to 3.5%.
- For retail trade, the tourist proportion for food and drug stores was reduced from 12.5% to 7.5%.
- For clothing stores, there was also a reduction, from10% to 7%.
- In the accommodation industry, the tourist proportion for campgrounds was reduced to 95%. However, campgrounds account for a very small percentage of total industry output, so the effect of this change on the overall numbers is minimal.
- For food and drinking places, the tourism proportions in use were reduced to 22.5% for full and limited service restaurants and drinking places. For other types of

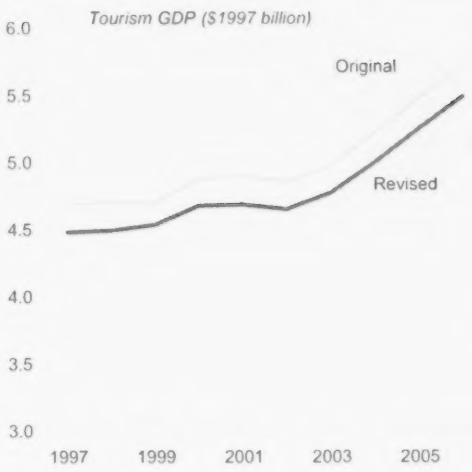
food services (which includes caterers plus mobile food services), the tourist share was reduced to 10%, since this industry primarily serves local residents. With these reductions, the tourism proportions in BC remain a little higher than the national average, which is consistent with the information obtained from industry organizations.

- In amusement and recreation, the ratio for theatrical and staged entertainment was increased to 20% to account for regional shows throughout BC where most of the paying audience is tourists. Similarly, the golf course proportion was increased to 24.5%, based on information obtained from the BC Golf Association.

- For car and truck rentals, the tourism proportion was reduced to 70% to account for local usage of these services. This brings the ratio more in line with the national average.

- The ratio for university and college education was reduced to 0.4%.

Effect of the revisions



Data Source: BC Stats

The overall effect of the changes was most significant in the retail component of the industry, where the reduction in tourism proportions used in the calculation resulted in a downward revision of 18%. The accommodation and food services component was reduced by about 6%, while transportation was reduced by 2%. These downward revisions were partly offset by an increase (+5%) in the estimate for other tourism-related services.

Appendix 2: Defining the tourism sector

The tourism sector includes a number of different industries that directly sell goods and services to tourists. These include some types of retailers (e.g., food stores, general merchandise stores, gas stations, RV dealers, clothing stores, and small retailers who sell souvenirs and other gift items to visitors). It should be noted that tourists are not the only customers served by these retailers, so only some of their GDP, employment and wages are attributed to the tourist sector. In calculating tourism-related retailing activities, we have assumed that gift, novelty and souvenir retailers and gas stations derive the biggest share of their business from tourists (about 15%), as do book stores and general merchandisers (about 10%). About 7.5% of the activities of food retailers and drug stores are assumed to be tourist related.

What is a tourist?

- A tourist is a person who travels to, or stays at, a place outside his/her usual environment for a period of no more than a year.
- A tourist can travel either for business or for pleasure. However, migratory workers (those living away from home on a temporary basis in order to be at their place of work) are not tourists.
- A tourist does not have to travel far from home, or stay away overnight. Tourists include day-trippers, as well as people making longer excursions.
- People visiting their vacation homes or cottages are considered to be tourists.

Tourism-related activities are significant in the transportation sector, especially in some industries such as air transportation, which focuses to a great extent on transporting passengers to various destinations.

In BC, tourists use the ferry system to visit the coastal islands, including Vancouver Island, and water transportation is an important industry within the transportation subsector.

As well, rail operators in the province provide tourists with unique opportunities to view the mountains and Interior regions of the province. However, passenger rail service in BC is limited, and this industry primarily serves a niche market–tourists who are willing to pay a premium in order to enjoy the experience of travelling by rail. Because BC is also a port province, a relatively small share of the total rail transportation industry is considered to be tourist-related. Most of the industry is concentrated on bringing freight to and from the west coast where it is loaded onto or off freighters at several busy deep sea ports.

Operators of intercity bus, urban transit, taxi, and sightseeing coaches and tours also play a key role in the province's tourism sector.

What else is included in the definition? Many different types of services, among which are travel and vehicle rental agencies, amusement and recreation services, and spending on parks and other public facilities enjoyed by tourists.

In the amusement and recreation industry, tourism activities are particularly important to operators of golf courses, ski resorts and museums but other venues such as casinos, theatres and sports facilities also derive some of their income from visits by tourists, so a portion of their activities is attributed to the tourist sector.

While the natural inclination might be to think that all activities of the accommodation and food services industry are tourist-related, this is not the case. Many hotels and other accommodation properties provide many services to locals, who dine out at their restaurants and hire banquet halls for special occasions. They may also make use of short- or even long-term accommodation services in their usual city of residence, and this would not be considered tourist activity. Similarly, campgrounds may be used by local residents as well as visitors, and most restaurants are more likely to be serving food and drinks to local residents than to visitors. Therefore, only a portion of the activities of this industry are considered tourist-related.

Tourists also visit movie theatres, use telecommunications services and laundromats as well as auto repair services.

Infoline

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Email transmission information service from BC Stats

also on the **Internet** at www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca

BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Oct 1/07	% change on one year ago
BC	4,402.9	1.5
Canada	33,091.2	1.0
GDP and INCOME (Revised Nov 8)		
(BC - at market prices)	2006	% change on one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	180,328	6.4
GDP *($ 2002 millions)*	158,335	3.3
GDP *($ 2002 per Capita)*	36,649	1.9
Personal Disposable Income *($ 1997 per Capita)*	23,996	5.0
TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Dec	3,395	-0.9
Merchandise Exports - Dec	2,238	-8.8
Retail Sales - Dec	4,818	1.1
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	% change on	12-month avg
(all items - Jan 2008)	one year ago	% change
BC	0.8	1.6
Vancouver	1.1	1.9
Victoria	0.3	1.0
Canada	2.2	2.2
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		
(seasonally adjusted)	Jan '08	% change on prev. month
Labour Force - BC	2,403	0.4
Employed - BC	2,305	0.5
Unemployed - BC	98	-2.9
		Dec '07
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	4.1	4.2
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	5.8	6.0
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Feb 27/08	Feb 28/07
Prime Business Rate	5.75	6.00
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	7.25	6.50
- 5 year	7.29	6.65
US-CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Feb 27/08	Feb 28/07
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $ per US $	0.9778	1.1700
(closing rate) US $ per Cdn $	1.0197	0.8548
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Jan '08	% change on one year ago
BC	771.68	3.8
Canada	770.02	5.1

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

High Technology - 2007

Input Indicators of the British Columbia High Technology Sector - 2007 Edition

This publication highlights conditions affecting the province's high technology sector from a supply-side perspective by tracking 37 business and economic climate indicators for BC, with comparisons to other provinces.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/bus_stat/busind/hi_tech.asp#HTpubs

Topic Tables – 2006 Census

What are the top languages spoken at home in your community? Where were a community's immigrants born? A different approach.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/cen06/topics/topics.asp

2007 Municipal Populations

Total population for municipalities and Regional Districts for July 1, 2007, as well as revised figures for 2002 to 2006, are now online.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/pop/pop/estspop.asp

Area Profiles

There is a new link in the **RESOURCES** tab found at the bottom of our left sidebar. This page acts as a gateway to all our area profile products. Each profile paints a statistical picture of an area using maps, charts, tables, rankings, comparisons, and more. Eight thousand individual files are available now.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/dd/profiles.asp

Released this week by BC Stats

- Business Indicators, February 2008
- Current Statistics, February 2008

Next week

- Tourism Sector Monitor, February 2008
- 2006 Census: Labour market activity; Industry; Occupation; Education; Language of work; Place of work; Mode of transportation. March 4

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